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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S JUNE 21 MEETING WITH VICE PRESIDENT  
TARIQ AL-HASHIMI

Classified By: Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

(C) SUMMARY: The Ambassador and other senior Embassy staff members met with Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi to discuss a number of topics including security, hydrocarbon legislation, the "three plus one" effort, and the effectiveness of the Ministry of Interior. While the Vice President reported progress on the negotiations related to the de-Baathification effort, he expressed concerns regarding security and the effectiveness of the law enforcement and paramilitary activities of the Ministry of Interior. END SUMMARY.

¶1. (C) On June 21, 2007, the Ambassador, Meghan O'Sullivan, the Economic Minister-Counselor, and others met with Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi (VP) to discuss a range of topics. The Ambassador expressed some frustration with so many senior officials from the Government of Iraq (GOI) traveling out of the country for lengthy periods of time, and welcomed al-Hashimi's decision to cancel a planned trip to Austria. The Ambassador asked about progress on the three plus one effort (an executive committee comprised of the Prime Minister, the President, and the two Vice Presidents), particularly in light of President Jalal Talabani's trip to China.

¶2. (C) The VP reported that he and President Talabani had been discussing the effort and had exchanged competing proposals, but in Talabani's absences, he had Talabani's authority to proceed with the process of resolving all outstanding issues. The draft text of an agreement was with Vice President Adil Abd al-Mahdi, who had promised comments within days. The Ambassador pressed the VP noting that it was in the best interest of the GOI to resolve the outstanding issues without delay. The VP stated that while the three plus one group has not been functioning formally, the Prime Minister, the President, and both Vice Presidents have met to discuss issues.

¶3. (C) The Ambassador informed the VP that negotiators from the GOI and Kurdistan Regional Government have agreed upon a draft Revenue Management law, and expressed the need to have it approved by the Council of Ministers and sent to the Council of Representatives (COR). The Ambassador also stated that the COR should act swiftly and decisively. The VP responded that while he had not seen the draft law in its final form, he did not expect major issues to arise.

¶4. (C) The Ambassador also asked if an effort was underway to promote more moderate groups. The VP responded that there was a systematic effort of meetings, though no concrete objective had been identified. He also stated that the efforts would continue.

¶5. (C) The VP then stated that he was primarily concerned how the GOI will serve the needs of the Iraqi people. O'Sullivan observed that passage of the Revenue Management law would benefit all Iraqis, and she encouraged the VP to publicly take credit for its passage. The Ambassador also

noted that the Revenue Management law provides transparency and accountability for funds accrued from petroleum production activities, that the law will have to be properly implemented, and that the law will give the Iraqi people the ability to hold the GOI accountable for the use of the funds.

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SECURITY  
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¶16. (C) The VP observed that no one had dreamed that the liberation from the previous regime would have resulted in the current security situation. He stated that there are signs of Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM) mobilization. The Ambassador also observed that JAM is a particularly difficult issue in the south and that Coalition Forces (CF) are watching Baghdad for indications of JAM activities. The VP stated that if the CF and the Iraqi Army (IA) are unable to address JAM aggression, the GOI and CF should consider arming neighborhood self-defense organizations, as has occurred in the al-Anbar province.

¶17. (C) The Ambassador noted that the Prime Minister has acknowledged the problem and considers it an appropriate topic for discussion. The idea of neighborhood self-defense organizations may be viable if they are linked to the Government; no one wants the formation of groups that may become a problem later. The Ambassador noted that the Prime Minister wants to form a committee to address the self-defense idea in an organized fashion. The Ambassador also stated that there are major actions underway against JAM and al-Qaeda and asked the VP about problems with the Ministry of Interior (MOI).

¶18. (C) The VP stated his concern that some Iraqi Security

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Forces (ISF) are still behaving along sectarian lines, but he has observed some improvement. He stated that the GOI and the CF need to be partners in addressing security issues. O'Sullivan suggested that the security matters and issues related to the performance of the ISF be addressed by the three plus one group. The VP stated that the Minister of Interior has been threatened and that coordination between the MOI and the VP's office has deteriorated. Al-Hashimi asserted that there were 15,000 people in uniform who were criminals.

¶19. (C) The VP asked for the Ambassador's help with issues associated with the MOI and in reforming MOI. He stated that the GOI has prepared memoranda to discuss the issues, but that no decisions had been made. The Ambassador agreed to assist where and when appropriate.

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DE-BAATHIFICATION  
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¶10. (C) O'Sullivan asked about progress on the de-Baathification effort. The VP stated that the issues in this arena were between the Sunnis and the Shia and that there appeared to be an agreement to allow higher level former Baath Party members to participate in the government. He noted that President Talabani had been lobbying for some flexibility in this regard. The VP stated that Vice President Adil Abd al-Mahdi had a draft of the law. The VP also stated that he did not object to senior Baath Party members being part of GOI security organizations; he wanted to leave the past in the past and focus on the future to avoid a breakup of the country.

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